



For Immediate Release

Ethics and Religious Culture Program

Québec public schools students suspended and will likely be expelled

Québec, Canada – December 18, 2008 – Granby’s Joseph-Hermas-Leclerc School has suspended students because they have exercised their constitutional right of religious freedom, by boycotting the Ethics and Religious Culture course which has been imposed by the government of Québec. These suspensions preceded a series of threats including to the Québec Youth Protection Services (DPJ) for adjudication which could lead to further action against the student and his parents. The parents summoned before the DPJ are part of a group of seven families subjected to the same threats of dismissal for refusing to be taught the new left-wing state religion of Quebec on normative pluralism.

The principal of the school demands a written commitment from the parents to force their children to attend the course. The parents have refused to comply on grounds of religious freedom. According to the Québec Ministry of Education, the course is compulsory yet not requisite for a high school diploma. The Coalition for Freedom in Education (Coalition pour la liberté en éducation – CLÉ) condemns these coercive measures. Québec’s Prime Minister Jean Charest, with the complicity of the leader of the official opposition Pauline Marois, denies parents the right of exemption. Henceforth, it is up to the government to decide what is spiritually good, and parents are no longer primarily responsible of their children’s religious and moral education, contrary to charters of rights and freedoms recognized all over the world, including Canada.

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